



ALBERT A. STIRPE, JR.  
Assemblyman 127<sup>th</sup> District

THE ASSEMBLY  
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Sports Development

December 11, 2015

Chairman Tom Wheeler  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Chairman Wheeler:

I am writing today in regard to the FCC's investigation into Special Access lines, a critical part of the communications infrastructure that forms the Internet's backbone. As you know, a few larger companies hold a near monopoly on this portion of the communications infrastructure. The exorbitant fees charged by these companies to smaller companies to use these lines drive up costs and discourage competition, and that has greatly hampered innovation within the industry.

I am particularly concerned about current Special Access regulations due to its impact on rural broadband and more generally on consumer prices for both internet access and cell phones.

The 127<sup>th</sup> State Assembly district that I represent has many rural areas, including the towns of Fabius and Pompey where high-speed internet access is often impossible to find. You have to wonder whether changing the current control over Special Access would help encourage the kind of innovation that would lead to more rural connectivity.

This issue also matters to me due to the impact on cell phone costs for all consumers. There's no doubt that the dominance of a few larger companies within the cell phone industry has hit consumer in the pocketbook. Nowhere is the dominance more acute than in the "Special Access" lines. Clearly, this is a complex issue, but it is one that deserves attention.

Thank you for your time. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue further with you or your staff.

Sincerely,

Albert A. Stirpe, Jr.  
New York State Assembly  
127<sup>th</sup> District